2: Courlander 8-4 (1937-1938) 1960 8V3 Haiti 8V3

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When I want to talk you do not want me to talk!
When I want to sing you do not want me to sing!
Dahomeyy ee, they do me wrong! *

Another note of criticism within the houngor concerns a person who has been putting on airs of importance. The song states that he (or she) in reality has not even qualified for the lowest order within the cult, even though he behaves as though he were the cult chief:

Ou pas houngi oh!	You are not yet a houngi, oh!
Ou di'm ou c'est houngan!	You tell me you are a houngan!
Ou pas houngi!	You are not yet a houngi!
Ou di'm ou c'est houngan c'est ça!	You tell me you are a houngan, it is so!
Oh, Pallie à Terre!	Oh, Straw on Earth! †
Pauvre alle!	Fetch and go!
Oh Allada malade oh! [Ex. 99]	Oh, Allada is sick, oh! ‡

Poverty is so normal in Haitian life that a man who accumulates wealth in any form becomes conspicuous. Ordinarily he does not welcome this conspicuousness. It makes him a target of *gossip* and rumors, and of those who might wish to collect debts from him, borrow money, or obtain other favors. He becomes a *gros nèg'*, and finds himself increasingly cut off from the community of ordinary, poor people. Needless to say, Haitians, like other people, dream of striking it rich. Wherever poverty has been acute, whether in Europe, Asia, or America, the folklore is full of tales of finding great treasures. Haiti is no exception. Many Haitian folk tales and folk songs deal with this theme, particularly with obtaining wealth by magical or supernatural means. Sometimes riches are obtained through *engagements*, unholy compacts with devils or demons. In some stories lua facilitate the discovery of treasure, in others a powerful houngor accomplishes it through magical practices. If a man suddenly becomes well-to-do, therefore, rumors may spread in regard to how he came by his wealth. If he is suspected of dealings with devils or with a powerful houngor, his apparent success in his venture makes him a neighbor to be feared. To avoid incurring envy and hostility, people tend to play down their financial successes and pretend they have nothing in life but the clothes they wear, their houses, and their gardens. Spreading word that a poor man has hidden money is regarded as a mean and reprehensible act. Numerous folk songs protest against this injustice:

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Dilmare vanité mwin lanwit-wè!
Si m'apé travaillé lè mwin cwin-wè,

* Literally: They eat my rights.
† An exclamation, the name of a certain enzyme.
‡ Allada, the name of a town in Dahomey, used in the sense of "people of Dahomey." The line means, "Things are in a bad state of affairs."